

Grant Proposal for Funding of the *Giving Individuals Freedom to Succeed*

Program at Almond-Bancroft

Elementary School

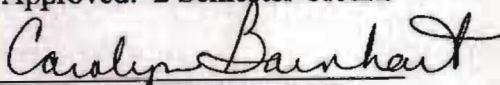
by

Cynthia D. Wills

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Carolyn Barnhart", written over a horizontal line.

Carolyn Barnhart, Ed.D.

Research Advisor

The Graduate School

University of Wisconsin-Stout

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**The Graduate School  
University of Wisconsin-Stout  
Menomonie, WI**

**Author:** Wills, Cynthia D.

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**ABSTRACT**

A chaotic, unsafe school climate challenges the abilities of educators to teach and students to learn. Positive interpersonal relationships and meaningful learning opportunities for all students can increase academic performance and yield healthy development. The Center for Research on School Safety, School Climate, and Classroom Management has found that school climate affects student achievement (Marshall, n.d.). Conflict resolution, one component of a balanced character education program, has been correlated with improved academic performance (Dillon, 2002).

A preventative discipline program at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School in the Almond-Bancroft School District that focuses on character education through the development of various literacy skills, meaningful consequences, and a team approach that involves administration, teachers, staff members, parents, and the community will improve the school climate, thereby improving student achievement. Almond-Bancroft Elementary School



implemented a program called *Giving Individuals Freedom To Succeed* (GIFTS). GIFTS is a staff-generated character education program that focuses on three guiding principles: respect, responsibility, and resolution. GIFTS has been successful in that it has challenged staff and students to think about and improve how we communicate with one another.

The potential outcomes of developing the GIFTS program are improved critical thinking skills, improved speaking and listening skills, increased involvement in classroom discussions and activities, improved problem-solving skills, improved performance on standardized assessments, reduced classroom and playground behavior referrals, increased instructional and learning time, increased teacher work satisfaction, and increased self-confidence of children and adults. Children may also have a greater sense of self-reliance and skills to affect positive social interactions.

The Graduate School

University of Wisconsin Stout

Menomonie, WI

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## Chapter I: Introduction

### *Statement of the Problem*

Phi Delta Kappa's 2006 Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools has identified lack of discipline as one the most serious problems facing our nation's education system (Rose & Gallup, 2006). Educators and students are also concerned about disorder and danger in our schools. A chaotic, unsafe school climate challenges the abilities of educators to teach and students to learn. Positive interpersonal relationships and meaningful learning opportunities for all students can increase academic performance and yield healthy development. The Center for Research on School Safety, School Climate, and Classroom Management has found that school climate affects student achievement (Marshall, n.d.). Conflict resolution, one component of a balanced character education program, has been correlated with improved academic performance (Dillon, 2002).

A preventative discipline program at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School in the Almond-Bancroft School District that focuses on character education through the development of various literacy skills, meaningful consequences, and a team approach that involves administration, teachers, staff members, parents, and the community will improve the school climate, thereby improving student achievement. Within the past three years, Almond-Bancroft Elementary School implemented a program called Giving Individuals Freedom To Succeed (GIFTS). GIFTS is a staff-generated character education program that focuses on three guiding principles: respect, responsibility, and resolution. GIFTS has been successful in that it has challenged staff and students to critically think about how to relate to one another. The elementary staff members removed detentions from behavior consequence options, compelling staff to consider more meaningful solutions to behavior concerns. While successful, the GIFTS

program is still in its infancy; there is a need for training to educate students, staff, administrators, school board members, and parents about character education and conflict resolution. Students and staff need to continue to improve literacy skills in order to better problem-solve and interact in social contexts.

This grant proposal supports Wisconsin Educator Standards #2 - Teachers know how children grow, #3 - Teachers understand that children learn differently, #4 - Teachers know how to teach, #5 - Teachers know how to manage a classroom, #6 - Teachers communicate well, and #10 - Teachers are connected with other teachers and the community (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2006). This proposal also supports Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's Educational Goals #2 - Developing thinking and communication processes, #4 - Acquiring the capacity and motivation for life-long learning, #5 - Developing emotional wellness and character, and #7 - Becoming a responsible citizen (School District of South Milwaukee, n.d.).

#### *Purpose of the Grant Proposal*

Psychiatrist William Glasser has written several highly-acclaimed books related to children, education, and schools. Glasser asserts that all human behavior is an attempt to meet basic needs that include survival, belonging and love, freedom, fun, and power (William Glasser Institute, 2006). Children come to schools with these basic needs fulfilled in varying degrees on different days, and they will work to satisfy these needs, knowingly or unknowingly, using healthy or unhealthy behaviors. Schools have the ability to influence how students use their literacy skills to fulfill basic needs. School climate is one such area that has the potential to significantly affect a student's well being. Research has shown that positive school climate has



been connected to fewer behavioral and emotional problems for students and can increase student achievement (Marshall, n.d.).

The GIFTS program at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School in Almond, Wisconsin is one such program that is working to develop a positive school climate using character education and the development of literacy skills. As a result of the GIFTS program, children educated at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School will experience a learning environment that is safe and welcoming. It is expected that children will be more responsible, respectful, and have the ability to use critical-thinking skills to resolve conflicts after adult modeling and explicit instruction in these areas. Having their basic needs met in the school environment, children will likely generalize and use these skills in other social contexts.

The potential outcomes of developing our GIFTS program are improved critical thinking skills, improved speaking and listening skills, increased involvement in classroom discussions and activities, improved problem-solving skills, improved performance on standardized assessments, reduced classroom and playground behavior referrals, increased instructional and learning time, increased teacher work satisfaction, and increased self-confidence of children and adults. Children may also have a greater sense of self-reliance and skills to effect positive social interactions.

The GIFTS program principles can be replicated in any environment where individuals work together. Leaders of organizations ranging from families to community groups to businesses can be taught how to infuse and foster the principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution in their organizations.

### *Definition of Terms*

*Character education* - The effort by schools, families, and communities to help people understand, care about, and act upon core ethical values (Klitz, 2003).

*Literacy* - "... an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society" (National Institute for Literacy, n.d., para. 2).

*School climate* - The social-psychological attributes of a school that include school members' shared ideologies, values, norms, beliefs, feelings, methodologies, and expectations for school members' behaviors and for the school's structure and operation (Western Alliance for the Study of School Climate, n.d.).

*Peer mediation* - A process for resolving disputes and conflicts in which a trained, neutral classmate acts as a moderator for the process (Hawley, n.d.).

### *Methodology*

The Almond-Bancroft School District is a 485-student, K-12 school located in rural Central Wisconsin. The student body is approximately 88% Caucasian, 11.5% Hispanic, and 0.5% other. Forty-four percent of families qualify for free and reduced lunch. The district participates in the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam once a year to assess performance in reading and math for third through eighth, and tenth grade students. In addition, fourth, eighth, and tenth graders are assessed in the areas of language, science, and social studies. The Almond-Bancroft Elementary School has exceeded state average performance in reading and mathematics. In 2006, 94% of Almond-Bancroft third-grade students scored at the proficient or advanced level in reading compared to the state average of 80%. Seventy-five percent of Almond-Bancroft students scored at the proficient or advanced level in mathematics compared to



the state average of 73%. Ninety-seven percent of Almond-Bancroft fourth-grade students scored at proficient or advanced levels in reading compared to the state average of 81%. Eighty-one percent of Almond-Bancroft fourth-grade students scored at the proficient or advanced levels in mathematics compared to the state average of 77%. Finally, an impressive 100% of fifth-grade students scored at the proficient or advanced levels compared to the state average of 83%. Eighty-eight percent of fifth-grade students scored at the proficient or advanced level in mathematics compared to the state average of 74% (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, n.d.).

In 2004, a group of Almond-Bancroft Elementary School staff members formed a committee to change the school's punitive behavior management system with one that lended itself to healthier child development and a positive school climate. The committee created a program called Giving Individuals Freedom To Succeed (GIFTS). The GIFTS program identified the principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution as goal behaviors and provided students with character education and literacy instruction to understand the meaning of the principles, identify examples of these principles in themselves and others, and practice how to emulate the principles in their daily lives through meaningful role play. The GIFTS committee also created school-wide classroom rules representing the three guiding principles: express yourself at an appropriate time with appropriate volume, protect yourself and others from physical and verbal harm, and use care with materials. Individual teachers have the option of developing one or two supplementary rules if they so chose. In addition to the in-class instruction of the principles, elementary school assemblies were scheduled to reinforce the concepts of respect, responsibility, and resolution by featuring staff members involved in skits or performers from outside the school community who shared our vision of a peaceful school. Staff

members were in-serviced about the GIFTS program and were encouraged to model and recognize the three principles. In addition to verbal recognition of students, teachers were given GIFTS student-recognition cards in order to share students' positive behaviors with their parents. To complement a school-wide focus on the behaviors of respect, responsibility, and resolution, the elementary school's consequence system needed to be revised to reflect the paradigm shift of our behavior management system. Rather than having 15-minute recess detentions as a consequence for inappropriate behaviors, teachers taught each other how to offer students meaningful consequences for their behaviors. If a student intentionally made rubber marks on the floor, they may use some free time to remove floor scuffmarks in the school or sweep a hallway. If, after a reminder from the teacher to stay on task, a student chose to visit with classmates rather than complete an assigned activity, they may use free time to make up for the lost study time. The GIFTS committee also created Short Term Recovery (STR) for students who, despite teacher efforts, disrupt the learning environment. STR is similar to a time out in that it gives the child an alternative space in which to get control of his/her behaviors. Teachers volunteer to allow a student into their classroom for an STR. If a student is unable to gain control of his/her disruptive behavior in STR, the student is referred to the elementary Dean of Students for further intervention.

While the GIFTS program at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School has been successful, teachers and administrators recognize that the program is in its infancy. The GIFTS program can be developed to further benefit the elementary school community. Staff members want research to support further development of the program. A literature review will follow to demonstrate the effect of positive school climate on student academic achievement. Research on peer



mediation, a form of conflict resolution, will be reviewed to illustrate the positive effect of peer mediation program on school climate and academic achievement.

In order to fund the research-supported projects that will improve Almond-Bancroft Elementary GIFTS program, a grant proposal will be offered that will identify potential funding sources, project goals and objectives, a project timeline, evaluation plan with correlating evaluation tools, a plan for dissemination of project findings, and a project budget.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

### *The Brain and Learning*

Neurologically speaking, learning is the efficient activation and suppression of nerve cells in response to a stimulus (Jensen, 2005), the recall of information from long-term memory. Neuroscientists offer important information about the effects of school climate-related issues and learning. Jensen states that research supports the idea that emotions, thinking and learning are all linked. The body produces several chemicals that influence emotion that have the effect of either strengthening memory or suppressing it. States of joy and pleasure release dopamine. Jensen states that dopamine is associated with improved flexibility in behavior and judgment and more flexibility in the brain's attentional system. The attentional system, located in the frontal lobe and associated with working memory, decision making, and judgement, is related to school success. Dopamine enables students to focus attention on important features of a learning situation (teacher instruction and board examples) and disregard irrelevant features (cluttered classroom). Dopamine also helps students associate positive feelings with learning, teachers, and the school environment.

Jensen (2005) asserts that stress and fear can have negative effects on learning. Blood flow decreases in various parts of the brain that are linked to cognition. Jensen referenced a study taken in 2000 of 4th and 5th graders that found that "students who perceived their environment to be violent performed significantly lower on standardized exams of reading and mathematics compared with students who did not have a perceived exposure to violence" (p. 74). Long-term exposure to stress can cause weakening of the dendrites, structures of brain cells that send messages, and impairs a student's ability to filter unimportant information from important information.



The effect of emotions on performance affects teachers as well as students. While females typically increase nurturing behaviors under stress, Jensen (2005) asserts that males tend to withdraw and use sarcasm. He adds that as accountability increases and control and resources diminish, stress experienced by staff will increase; this stress will affect students.

Jensen states that teachers create learning environments that the brain craves by helping their students feel good about learning through academic success, friendship-building, and classroom celebrations. Specific examples of improving the classroom climate is to ask students compelling questions, role-model the love of learning, plan celebrations such as classroom parties, guest speakers, debates, student acknowledgements; use physical activity in the classroom, create rituals, and develop a system of personal connection in the classroom (Jensen, 2005).

### *Social Environment*

The effect of the social environment on learning has roots in the field of cognitive psychology. Albert Bandura developed Social Cognitive Learning Theory that asserts that learning is the result of the interaction of three variables: personal, behavioral, and environmental (Bruning, Schraw, Norby, & Ronning, 2004). Personal factors include beliefs and attitudes; behavioral factors include the response one makes in a given situation, such as reacting to a poor assignment score by studying more or reacting to a poor test grade by getting angry; environmental factors include the roles played by teachers, peers, and parents. Bandura claims that learning can occur enactively, repeating a task until mastery is achieved; or vicariously, when one masters a task by watching others perform or discuss it.

Research has supported the idea that teachers and students are more effective when they have high self-efficacy, the positive judgment of their ability to perform a task within a specific

domain. Students with high self-efficacy have a higher level of task engagement, persistence, strategy use, help seeking, and task performance than their classmates with low self-efficacy. Students with low ability and high self-efficacy can perform as well as their high-ability/low-efficacy peers (Bruning et al., 2004). Bandura found that high self-efficacy was related to a person's perceived control on the environment.

Teachers with high efficacy are more likely to use praise with their students, persevere with low-achieving students, be task oriented, be more accepting of students, and raise their achievement levels and they are more likely to use new curriculum materials and change instructional strategies (Bruning et al., 2004). High-efficacy teachers spend more time focused on academic learning and have higher student accountability. Social support that includes positive relationships with administration and colleagues is one way to foster high teacher self-efficacy. Bruning et al. adds that teacher collaboration, which includes colleague feedback in order to identify goals, plan, and evaluate is another method of improving teacher self-efficacy.

Schools, themselves, have self-efficacy. Bruning et al. states that schools whose community members judge themselves powerless to improve student achievement can negatively affect both students and teachers. Other factors affecting the schools' self-efficacy are the stability of the student body, a district's socioeconomic status, and prior academic achievement.

Social constructivism is a theory of learning that asserts that learners are active in constructing their own knowledge and that social interactions are important to knowledge construction (Bruning et al., 2004). Psychologist Lev Vygotsky was one of the first scientists to assert that higher mental functions originate in the social interactions with adults or capable peers. Social constructivists view teachers as guides and coaches more than disseminators of information. Vygotsky believed that language was one of the most important social and



cognitive tools, and classroom discussions were the venue through which students demonstrated that they were active agents in their own learning by constructing new concepts and developing new ways of thinking.

### *Basic Needs*

Psychiatrist William Glasser has written several highly acclaimed books related to children, education, and schools. Glasser asserts that all human behavior is an attempt to meet basic needs that include survival, belonging and love, freedom, fun, and power (William Glasser Institute, 2006). Children knowingly work to fulfill their basic needs using healthy or unhealthy behaviors. Psychologist Abraham Maslow also spoke to the issue of human needs in 1954. He believed that people were motivated by a hierarchy of needs: physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization. Physiological needs include oxygen, water, food, and health; safety is being safe from danger, attack, and threat; belongingness and love are positive and loving relationships; esteem is feeling valued and the value of oneself; self-actualization is the development of oneself to the fullest (Bolman and Deal, 2003).

Schools have the ability to influence how students work to fulfill basic needs. In his book *The Quality School Teacher* (1998), Glasser suggests that schools teach students about choice theory, a psychology that explains "how we choose to live our lives" (p. 97). Glasser adds that choice theory teaches children that we choose behaviors and our behaviors are our best attempt to control the world around us in order to realize the picture of the quality world that we have in our minds. Discussions are generated using real-life problem-solving situations and focus on working toward the healthiest solution. For example, a teacher reports to her students she yelled at her daughter the previous night for not cleaning her room. The teacher would explain why keeping the house tidy is important to her, referring to the basic needs: she

experiences power from having a tidy home and ensures survival by keeping germs under control. The teacher would continue by stating that her yelling at her daughter took away her daughter's sense of fun, belonging, and power. The teacher would ask the students for feedback about how a healthier outcome could have been achieved. Students, through their engagement with each other, strengthen their literacy skills and are able to use language more proficiently to obtain more favorable outcomes.

In *The Quality School*, Glasser suggests that teachers work to create a nonadversarial classroom climate with courtesy as a core behavior (1998, p. 124-125). He encourages teachers to help students understand that punishment is not an effective consequence for a behavior; problem-solving restorative or preventative solutions yield a healthier development of a child. For example, a teacher may find that a student is consistently coming to class late. The typical teacher response would be to assign some sort of punishment, such as a detention. Glasser, however, suggests that the teacher use the situation as a learning opportunity. The teacher may want to consider talking to the students about the problem and brainstorm reasons why a student may be late for class. The teacher may ask students advice for how to deal with the problem. Some students may suggest a detention, and the teacher may facilitate a conversation about the effectiveness of detentions. Finally, the teacher would ask for alternative suggestions for dealing with the problem of tardiness. Glasser would hope that the teacher and students come away from the discussion with the idea that behaviors are a person's attempt to meet basic needs and seemingly simple behavior problems may be more complex; change may be needed on both the teacher's and student's parts that will result in the best solution.



### *School Climate and Achievement*

School climate represents the social-psychological attributes of a school including school members' shared ideologies, values, norms, beliefs, feelings, methodologies and expectations for school members' behaviors and for the school's structure and operation (Western Alliance for the Study of School Climate, n.d.). The assessment of school climate can be a complicated process that involves surveys, observations, focus groups, and interviews; however, Noonan states that school climate can be assessed by asking, "What does this school *feel* like?" (Noonan, 2005, p. 61). Noonan encourages school visitors to observe the contents of the walls and bulletin boards, observe the quality of interactions between students and teachers, and, hopefully, observe how problems are solved.

Noonan asserts that there are seven contributing factors to a healthy school climate: models, consistency, depth, democracy, community, engagement, and leadership. Teachers must be role models. They need to balance setting limits with opportunities for children to make choices as well as balance offering help with setting high expectations for students to reach on their own. School staff must work as a team and send consistent messages to students about their beliefs. Depth refers to a school's ability to look below the surface of their rituals, mission statements, and school pledges and reflect on how these practices affect the healthy development of children and adults. A school democracy practices shared decision-making involving administrators, staff, students, parents, and community members. Healthy schools open their doors to people outside the building. Community members, parents, and business representatives are encouraged to volunteer in school to enrich the learning environment.

Several issues contribute to negative school climate. Kant and March (2004) cite that disruptive behavior in the school setting is increasing and is threatening classroom instruction

and the overall school climate. Bullying is a serious behavior that significantly affects a school's climate. About one in seven school children has either been a bully or been the target of a bully (Coloroso, 2003). An organization's leadership model can affect climate. Bolman and Deal (2003) stated that when bosses direct and control people at lower levels, they encourage passivity and dependence. They claim that, as a result, workers tend to withdraw, become apathetic, they resist or sabotage leadership initiatives, leave for a better job, form alliances to redress the power imbalance, or teach others to believe that work in unrewarding and hope for advancement is slim.

Hantman, Bairu, Barwick, Smith, Meston, Rocks, & James (2002) of the National Center for Education Statistics - Crime, Violence, and Discipline Task Force also assert that children need safe and orderly schools in order to learn. The correlation of school climate to student achievement is supported in research. School climate research correlates positive interpersonal relationships and optimal learning opportunities for students in all demographic areas with increased achievement levels and a reduction of maladaptive behaviors (McEvoy and Welker, 2000). Freiberg (1998) states the interaction of various school and classroom climate factors creates a supportive environment allowing all members of the school community to learn and teach at optimum levels. Hantman et al. (2002) reported that significant improvements in learning were reported from a comprehensive school-wide program to prevent problem behaviors. Several elementary schools in a Pacific Northwest school district that participated in the behavior prevention program "reported academic improvement in 4th grade reading, language arts, spelling, science, and social studies on the California Achievement Test" (Hantman et al, 2002, p. 4).



### *Improving School Climate*

School climate results from the investment of administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members. Fortunately, school climate is not fixed; it can be improved.

However, some schools may unknowingly make school climate worse in their efforts to improve it. Schools may try to improve school climate by using reactive, punitive approaches such as detention, suspension, expulsion, and exclusion in the hopes that such consequences will teach and promote positive social skills (Kant and March, 2004). There are several strategies schools can do to improve school climate. Schools can increase parental involvement, implement character education programs and promote fundamental moral values, use anti-bullying and conflict resolution curricula, increase knowledge of and prevent bullying behaviors, create an environment in which people are treated fairly, equally, and with respect, and provide a safe environment for the school community (Marshall, n.d.). Lewis and Sugai (1999) suggest a school-wide proactive behavior program teaches all students basic behavior expectations and establishes a means of communication for all staff and students. Such a program has six components: a positive statement of purpose, school-wide behavior expectations, methods of teaching behavior expectations, procedures for acknowledging positive student behavior, interventions that discourage problem behaviors, and monitoring and assessment of the behavior program.

Character education programs and peer mediation are two specific programs that schools can implement to improve school climate. Gary Kiltz defines character education as "the deliberate effort by schools, families, and communities to help young people understand, care about, and act upon core ethical values" (Kiltz, 2003, Definition and Rationale Section, para. 2). The explicit teaching of values has been considered the foundation for effective citizenship and

the continuation of the democratic society (Sanchez, 2005). Character education programs range from staff-generated to nationally-known programs. Four character education programs used throughout the United States include Character Counts, Building Esteem in Students Today (BEST), The Character Development Program (CDP), and Community Caring. Character Counts focuses on six pillars: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and friendship (Finck et al, 2003, p. 40). The BEST program focuses on positive climate, curiosity, responsibility, caring and sharing, goal-setting, health and prevention, conflict and feelings, and self-esteem. The CDP character education program focuses on a child's natural desire to do the right thing while providing opportunities to identify appropriate behaviors using peer, adult, and community models. CDP integrates the values of home and community throughout the curriculum. Community Caring bases its program on the core values of trust, caring, respect, responsibility, and family. The program's goal is to instill in children a sense of community, not self-centered individualism. Like the CDP program, values are integrated across the curriculum and emphasize family and community involvement. While the four character programs differ, they are all based on the idea that healthy character and values are important to the school community as a whole (Finck, 2003).

Peer mediation, a form of conflict resolution, is one facet of a comprehensive character education program. Peer mediation is a process for resolving disputes and conflicts in which a trained, neutral classmate acts as a moderator for the process (Hawley, 1997). The purpose of character education programs, in general, and peer mediation programs, in particular, is to teach children the language skills necessary for peaceful living. If we want children to eventually work out larger issues on their own, we need to provide them with guided learning opportunities to resolve conflict when they are young (Church, 2005). Church states that children do not use



effective language to solve conflict because they do not know the right words. Class time devoted to learning the language of conflict resolution is important because children are given the opportunity to practice these skills in a calm, supportive environment.

Peer mediation programs offer students training to help their classmates resolve conflicts; these skills are then put to use in the daily operation of school. According to Cheryl Stinsky, of Alternative Resolutions, Inc., located in Menasha, Wisconsin, peer mediation programs can be implemented in several ways: some students are chosen to receive conflict resolution training and act as peer mediators, all students can receive conflict resolution training as part of the curriculum with a select group of students acting as peer mediators, or all students receiving training and all students having the opportunity to act as peer mediators (C. Stinsky, personal communication, June 13, 2007). Ms. Stinsky stated that the best peer mediation programs are those that teach conflict resolution to all students.

Peer mediation programs, while they can differ in their implementation, have a common method for helping classmates resolve conflicts. The Encyclopedia of Psychology (n.d.) offers a typical peer mediation process. When a peer mediator meets with two classmates, the peer mediator introduces him/herself and explains the rules to create a comfortable environment. The mediator listens to each disputant describe the problem. The mediator asks each student to tell their "story", listening for facts and feelings. The mediator may ask questions to clarify the problem. The mediator asks both disputants to brainstorm possible solutions to the problem. If none can be offered, the mediator returns to the previous steps or it may be necessary to have individual meetings with the mediator to help generate solutions. Once possible solutions to the problem are identified, the mediator identifies those solutions upon which both disputants agree. The mediator writes a solution contract which both disputants sign and a follow-up meeting is

scheduled to discuss the effectiveness of the solution. Not all forms of conflict are suitable for peer mediation. Assault and other criminal behaviors are not appropriate for peer mediation. Name-calling, rumors, and forms of bullying are the most common conflicts referred to peer mediation (Hawley, 1997).

Peer mediation is one spoke in the wheel of a healthy school climate. Climate is an evaluation of the social structures of a school, and it has been established that a positive school climate can improve student academic achievement and a negative school climate can impede a student's ability to learn. Investing in initiatives that have been shown to improve school climate is in the best interest of our students.



### Chapter III: Project Goals and Objectives

The staff at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School in Almond, Wisconsin have recognized that school climate is an issue worth addressing. The staff initiated a school-wide program called Giving Individuals Freedom To Succeed (GIFTS) that provides for the role modeling and explicit instruction of the principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution. While the program has demonstrated success, the Almond-Bancroft staff recognizes that the program is still in its infancy and needs further development. During the process of creating the GIFTS program, staff members also recognized that positive school climate must be fostered at all levels of management in the school. The goals listed below focus on the improvement of school climate in the elementary school as well as for the evaluation of school climate initiatives. Upon attainment of the goals listed below, it is the belief of the Almond-Bancroft Elementary staff that our school will be a democratic, safe, and positive environment in which to teach and learn.

*Goal #1: Develop a Preventative Discipline Plan Which Focuses on Character Education, Literacy Development, and Meaningful Consequences at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School in Almond, Wisconsin.*

A positive school climate is the result of several factors working together: the structures that establish behavior expectations and methods of communication; leadership that communicates the school climate vision to students, models strong character, and is observant of interactions between individuals; and relationships that demonstrate respect, responsibility, and resolution. The GIFTS program at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School seeks to improve school climate by developing a preventative discipline plan that addresses the issues of structure, communication, leadership, and relationships.

*The Portage County Sheriff's Department will provide CounterACT instruction to*

*fifth-grade students.* CounterACT is a program sponsored by the Portage County Sheriff's Department that teaches fifth-grade students the literacy skills necessary to resist alcohol, chemicals, and tobacco and choose activities that are safe, legal, and fun. The students are first made aware how alcohol and tobacco companies design their advertising to make drinking and smoking appealing to viewers. Most of the instruction focuses on teaching students the assertive language skills needed to interact with peers to identify troubling situations, offer a positive alternative activity if a peer wants them to engage in a troubling activity, and effectively end an interaction that makes a student uncomfortable. The CounterACT officer and fifth-grade teachers role-play troubling situations, and students practice CounterACT skills in small groups. A CounterACT workbook is provided to the students as a resource during instruction. Students and parents complete short activities together to encourage discussion of CounterACT skills. Finally, in an all-school assembly, a CounterACT graduation ceremony is held; graduates perform skits that demonstrate their acquired skills to their younger classmates, and the graduates receive CounterACT certificates. CounterACT skills are revisited throughout the year. Teachers reference the skills to help students work out conflicts, and students are recognized who demonstrate CounterACT skills. Ninety-five percent of fifth-grade students will graduate from the CounterACT program. CounterACT graduates have demonstrated the literacy skills necessary to resist alcohol, chemicals, and tobacco and can instead engage in activities that are safe, legal, and fun.

*Administrators, teachers, and staff will be taught necessary literacy skills to manage student behavior with dignity and meaningful consequences.* Corwin Kronenberg, a nationally-known presenter and expert on self-concept and discipline, will present "Teaching Children to be Responsible" to Almond-Bancroft staff. Mr. Kronenberg reflects the values of the GIFTS



program: he emphasizes respect and responsibility, believes in restorative action and problem-solving to resolve conflict, and interacts with others using enthusiasm and humor. Mr.

Kronenberg will provide the school community with skills to interact with our children in ways that foster a healthy development.

*Teachers and support staff will send home positive reports about students' behaviors using a pre-printed postcard.* Students are taught how to recognize the principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution in themselves and others and practice behaviors that reflect the three principles during in-class activities. Recognition of positive behaviors and parent involvement are important elements of the GIFTS program. Pre-printed GIFTS postcards will be completed by teachers recognizing individual students for demonstrating behaviors consistent with the beliefs of the GIFTS program. The postcards will be displayed on the school's GIFTS wall and will be sent home to parents at the end of each school week. Ninety-five percent of year-round elementary school students will receive at least one GIFTS student-recognition postcard by the end of March 2008. Students who receive student-recognition postcards have demonstrated the principles of respect, responsibility and resolution. Teachers who complete student-recognition cards have made an effort to focus on positive student behaviors.

*Students will be provided with character education and literacy instruction which focuses on respect, responsibility, and resolution.* One limitation schools experience in their effort to improve school climate is that children lack the literacy skills necessary to coexist peacefully with each other. The Almond-Bancroft Elementary School's guidance counselor will provide in-class character education instruction that focuses on the targeted principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution. Students will be given the language skills needed to work together effectively through modeling, guided practice, and independent practice of such skills. At least

90% of students in first through fifth grades will receive character education and literacy instruction that focuses on respect, responsibility, and resolution. When students learn about the three guiding principles and effective speaking and listening skills, they will be better equipped to interact more peacefully.

*Teachers will identify students in need of positive adult interaction and develop relationships with them.* The foundation of school climate improvement initiatives is the belief that students need meaningful relationships with their classmates and adults. Teachers will work together to review class lists and identify students who are in exceptional need of positive adult interaction. Fellow teachers will volunteer to make extra efforts to foster positive relationships with identified children in order to make their school experience more pleasant. One hundred percent of students identified as needing additional positive adult interaction will have had relationships fostered by staff members. Students who feel that they belong are less prone to engage in negative behaviors.

*Teachers and staff members will organize quarterly elementary school assemblies to reinforce the guiding principles of respect, resolution, and responsibility.* The GIFTS program's target principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution need to become part of the school culture in order to result in meaningful changes in school climate. The Almond-Bancroft Elementary School's teachers and staff members will work together to organize quarterly school assemblies to reinforce GIFTS concepts. The assemblies may include skits that involve the students in discussions, short videos that address a target virtue, or a guest performer that speaks to GIFTS ideas. One hundred percent of the projected GIFTS quarterly assemblies will take place. Repetition and reinforcement of the three guiding principles by adult and student role models will aid in the development of these principles in all students.



*Goal #2: Evaluate the Effectiveness of Almond-Bancroft Elementary School's School Climate Initiatives.*

Effective school initiatives establish performance criteria and develop evaluation tools as part of the process to measure the degree to which programs met established goals. The GIFTS school climate improvement program should include information from several sources: Portage County Sheriff's Department CounterACT Officer, student-recognition cards, elementary guidance counselor, staff members, GIFTS committee members, Dean of Students, parents, administrators, and students.

*The Dean of Students will document the number of behavior referrals to the elementary office at the end of each quarter.* The number of student office behavior referrals provides information about the quality of interactions among students and students as well as teachers, thereby illuminating the level of effectiveness of the GIFTS program. The Dean of Students will document the number of behavior referrals to the elementary office at the end of each quarter. The results will be shared with the GIFTS committee for program evaluation purposes. The total office referrals documented by the Dean of Students in the 2007-2008 school year will not exceed the 2006-2007 school year's totals.

*Students, teachers, administrators, and parents will complete the Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools (WINSS) school climate survey that communicates their perception of the school climate at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School.* Student input is necessary to determine the effectiveness of the GIFTS program. Students will complete the WINSS school climate survey near the end of the third quarter of the school year to determine students' perceptions of the school environment. Students will be asked questions related to belonging, safety, choices, respect, and expectations. Teachers, administrators, and parents also

contribute to a school's climate, and their opinions are vital to understanding the impact of the GIFTS program. Questions will address morale, learning, people recognition, respect, and student achievement. The WINSS school climate survey will be offered to the elementary school's students, staff, administrators, and parents in March 2008. Eighty percent of responses on the school climate surveys taken by students, staff, parents, and administrators will be above neutral.

*School staff will complete an evaluation of in-service speaker, Corwin Kronenberg.* Mr. Kronenberg will present "Teaching Children to be Responsible" for Almond-Bancroft K-12 staff at the January 9, 2008 in-service. Mr. Kronenberg's beliefs about educating children are parallel to those of the GIFTS program, and his presentations have been well received by school staff and administrators. The GIFTS committee would like to determine the degree to which Mr. Kronenberg's presentation affected staff members' attitudes about working with children and if they plan to implement any of Mr. Kronenberg's strategies in their professional practices. At least 75% of responses on Corwin Kronenberg's in-service evaluation form that require rating will be above neutral.

*GIFTS committee members will analyze Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam data.* Third through fifth-grade students participate in state-wide standardized testing either in the fall or spring. The Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam assesses students' knowledge of reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies skills. Student achievement in each area is determined to be minimal, basic, proficient, or advanced. Standardized test scores on the 2007 Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam for grades three through five will remain at or above state averages in the areas of mathematics, reading, language, science, and social studies. Note that students in grades three and five are only tested in mathematics and reading. Data



from the 2007-2008 school year will be analyzed and compared to 2006-2007 test data to determine what relationship exists, if any, between school climate improvement initiatives and student academic improvement.

*Third through fifth-grade students will complete a peer mediation evaluation form.* All students will be taught conflict resolution skills in the classroom as part of the guidance counselor's character education program. Some students will be trained to work with their classmates to help them resolve problems. Students will be asked questions related to their awareness of peer mediation as a service to help students resolve conflicts, participation in peer mediation, awareness of conflict resolution instruction in the classroom, and their comfortable methods for resolving conflicts with classmates. Ninety percent of third through fifth-grade students will be aware that peer mediation is available as a way to help them solve conflicts with their classmates, at least 10% of surveyed students will have utilized peer mediation, and at least 85% of surveyed students will be able to identify one strategy to solve conflicts peacefully.

## Chapter IV: Project Methodology

The Almond-Bancroft Elementary School community believes that school climate is an important issue. The staff initiated a school-wide program called Giving Individuals Freedom To Succeed (GIFTS) that provides for the modeling and explicit instruction of the principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution. The GIFTS program has been successful in unifying the school around core values important to all and prompted staff members to think critically about the way they construct their learning environments and interact with students. Students have been provided with basic skills to help them coexist more peacefully with others. The school community recognized that the program has not reached its full potential; further steps can be taken to create a school that has a democratic, safe, and positive environment in which to teach and learn. This chapter will include an action plan that includes the activities, persons responsible, and the timeframe related to each activity; an explanation of the evaluation plan, evaluation tools, and data collection; a dissemination plan for sharing program evaluation information, and a budget narrative.

### *Action Plan and Timeline*

The Almond-Bancroft Elementary School's GIFTS committee is comprised of approximately five teachers, the Dean of Students, and the K-12 principal. Some activities will be done on a volunteer basis by either committee members or elementary staff, and other activities will be done by specific individuals due to their area of expertise. During the August, 2007 teacher in-service days, GIFTS committee members will volunteer to speak at the elementary faculty meeting to review the purpose and concepts of the GIFTS program. The GIFTS student recognition cards will be distributed at the faculty meeting with a reminder about the purpose of the card and procedures for completing the cards. Teachers will also be reminded



about Short-Term Recovery (STR) as a method of addressing challenging student behaviors and review the process for referring a student to STR. A GIFTS committee member will volunteer to meet with new staff within the first few days of in-service to give them more detailed information about the program. Guidance counselor Dawn Barber will schedule character education classes with the elementary teachers. In August 2007, GIFTS committee member Cynthia Wills will schedule January in-service speaker, Corwin Kronenberg. In September, the GIFTS committee will meet to discuss the first GIFTS assembly of the year, which will be held Mid-September. The faculty will use a portion of their September faculty meeting to identify students in need of additional positive adult contact; the information will be kept with the elementary guidance counselor. Staff members will be chosen to receive peer mediation training, and a GIFTS committee member will have scheduled Cheryl Stinsky of Alternative Resolutions, Inc. to visit our school to train the selected teachers. In October, the two fifth-grade teachers will schedule the CounterACT sessions and graduation with the Portage County CounterACT officer. At the October faculty meeting, a GIFTS committee member will volunteer to facilitate a staff discussion regarding methods for choosing peer mediators. Designated teachers will be training in peer mediation at Almond-Bancroft School in October, and a date will be scheduled to train student peer mediators. The Dean of Students will complete the first-quarter behavior referral report and present the information to the school board. The first quarter will end with the GIFTS committee meeting to plan the second GIFTS assembly for the end of November, and students will be trained as peer mediators.

In November, GIFTS committee member Cynthia Wills will confirm Corwin Kronenberg's January in-service date and make arrangements for any necessary accommodations. Guidance Counselor Dawn Barber will use November character education

classes to discuss the peer mediation program and conflict resolution skills. GIFTS committee members will meet in December to discuss the details of the January GIFTS assembly that will be combined with the fifth-grade CounterACT graduation. In January 2008, fifth-grade students will receive CounterACT training from the Portage County Sheriff's Department. After their training, students will send home graduation invitations to family members. The third GIFTS assembly will feature information about the new peer mediation program and process as well as the CounterACT graduation. The Dean of Students will complete the second-quarter behavior report and present the information at the February school board meeting. The January teacher in-service will feature Corwin Kronenberg speaking to Almond-Bancroft staff about establishing an effective, meaningful learning environment for children. The school's Spanish translator will create Spanish forms of the student and parent student climate survey along with a Spanish version of the school climate survey informational letter that will be sent home to parents in February.

The GIFTS committee will meet in February 2008, to plan for the school climate survey that is scheduled for the end of March. A GIFTS committee member will volunteer to speak at the February faculty meeting to inform staff about the school climate survey protocol and provide them with information sheets and consent forms to be sent home to parents. Survey information sheets and consent forms will be provided to staff and administrators as well. At the end of March, teachers will receive parent school climate surveys to send home with students, student school climate surveys to be completed in class, and/or a teacher school climate surveys. Administrators will be given school climate surveys to complete. Completed surveys will be due by the first week in April. The Dean of Students will complete the third-quarter behavior referral report and present the information at the April school board meeting.



The GIFTS committee will meet in April to discuss the final GIFTS assembly of the year and the delegation of work to study completed school climate surveys. The GIFTS assembly will be scheduled for the end of April or early in May. In May, GIFTS committee members will meet to review Almond-Bancroft Elementary School WKCE test results for the 2007-2008 school year. A plan will be discussed how best to synthesize the information from peer mediation evaluations, school climate surveys, and WKCE test results. Students will complete a peer-mediation evaluation form within the last two weeks of school, and the information will be given to the guidance counselor. The Dean of Students will complete the fourth-quarter behavior referral report and present the information at the June school board meeting. The GIFTS committee will have a meeting in June to review the evaluation information, and a GIFTS committee member will volunteer to create a summary of the data that will be shared with the Almond-Bancroft School Board during the August school board meeting. The data will also be submitted for publication in the district's newsletter for the August mailing.

#### *Evaluation Plan*

The evaluation of the GIFTS program includes input from students, staff, administrators, and parents. In January 2008, the fifth-grade students will receive CounterACT instruction from the Portage County Sheriff's Department. By the end January 2008, GIFTS committee members will use class rosters and teacher input to compare the total number of fifth-grade students with CounterACT graduates to determine a percentage of CounterACT graduates. Corwin Kronenberg, an expert in self-concept and discipline, will present "Teaching Children to be Responsible" at the January 9, 2008 in-service. Staff members will be provided with a program evaluation to complete after the presentation (see Appendix H to view the evaluation). By the end of February 2008, GIFTS committee members will determine the percentage of responses

above a neutral rating by comparing the total number of responses requiring rating with the total number of responses above a neutral rating (see Appendix H).

The GIFTS committee plans to organize four GIFTS assemblies during the school year to reinforce the principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution. In May 2008, GIFTS committee members will compare the target number of GIFTS assemblies with the actual number of GIFTS assemblies to determine the percentage of GIFTS assemblies presented to students.

Students have the opportunity to receive GIFTS student-recognition cards for demonstrating any of the guiding principles during the school day. The cards will be sent home to families in celebration of appropriate behavior. In June 2008, the elementary guidance counselor will use class rosters and collected GIFTS student-recognition cards prepared for mailing to compare the total number of Almond-Bancroft Elementary School students with the total number of students receiving at least one student-recognition card to determine the percentage of students who received at least one student-recognition card.

The elementary guidance counselor will be providing character education to students in first through fifth grades. In June 2008, the elementary guidance counselor will use class rosters to compare the total number of students in the class with the number of students regularly scheduled in the classroom for character education instruction to calculate a percentage of students who received character education instruction.

At the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year, staff members will identify a list of students in need of additional positive adult interaction. In June 2008, GIFTS committee members will compare the list of students identified as needing additional positive adult



interaction with the actual number of students who received such interaction to determine a percentage of students who received additional positive adult interaction.

The Dean of Students will complete a quarterly report of office behavior referrals. By the end of the 2007-2008 school year, the Dean of Students will have completed four Quarterly Behavior Reports (see Appendix C to view the form). GIFTS committee volunteers will analyze the behavior reports and identify the average number of office referrals per quarter, the behaviors that resulted in most office referrals, and a correlation, if any exists, between an office referral and a specific context, such as a location in the school, activity, age of students, and referring teacher. The 2007-2008 data will be compared with 2006-2007 behavior report data.

Teachers, students, administrators, and parents will complete a paper copy of the WINSS school climate survey in March 2008 (see Appendices D, E, F, and G for school climate survey examples). GIFTS committee members will volunteer to enter the information online at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction will collate the data. A GIFTS committee member will print the results, and the committee will analyze the survey data. By July 2008, GIFTS committee members will tally the total number of different responses. Responses that are above a neutral rating will be tallied and compared with the total number of responses to determine a total number of responses that are above a neutral rating.

Third through fifth-grade students will participate in the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam in either the fall or spring of the 2007-2008 school year. Test data is published on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website. In July 2008, GIFTS members will compare Almond-Bancroft Elementary School's 2007 Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam online test results for grades three through five in the areas of reading, mathematics,

language, science, and social studies with the 2007 state averages. Deviations from the state averages will be noted.

The elementary guidance counselor will record student use of peer mediation from the date of peer mediation implementation. The total number of peer mediation referrals from the date of peer mediation implementation as well as the type of conflict that resulted in peer mediation will be determined at the end of the 2007-2008 school year. Third through fifth-grade students will complete a peer mediation evaluation form at the end of the 2007-2008 school year (see Appendix I for peer mediation form). The students will be asked to evaluate their awareness of peer mediation as a service offered to students, their use of peer mediation to help them solve conflicts with their classmates, their opinion of the effectiveness of peer mediation, and examples of strategies they currently use for solving conflicts after having been taught conflict resolution skills. In July 2008, GIFTS committee members will use enrollment data to determine the total number of third through fifth-grade students; this information will be compared with the number of third through fifth-grade students who utilized peer mediation to determine the percentage of third through fifth-grade students who used peer mediation to help them resolve conflicts with classmates. Committee members will also identify a list of facts students learned about conflict resolution and compare this information with the strategies students are using to help them resolve conflicts with their peers.

### *Dissemination Plan*

The Almond-Bancroft Elementary School's GIFTS program is of interest to several groups of people including parents of our elementary-aged children, the teachers and administrator of our middle and high schools, as well as teachers and administrators in other districts who struggle with the issues related to school climate. The GIFTS committee members



plan to present information about the progress related to the development of the GIFTS program in several ways. The Dean of Students will present information related to office behavior referrals at school board meetings. GIFTS committee members will present GIFTS program evaluation at the August 2008 school board meeting and share the results with the community using the August 2008 district newsletter. In addition, GIFTS committee members will write articles for the monthly district newsletter describing GIFTS activities. Upon completion of the 2007-2008 school year, GIFTS committee members will write articles for publication in several education-related journals describing the rationale, development, and evaluation of the GIFTS program and post information about the district's GIFTS program on education-related websites.

### *Budget*

Most of the budget expenses for GIFTS school climate improvement initiatives at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School relate to staff training, an essential investment for meaningful change in an organization. Mr. Kronenberg is a nationally-known expert in self-concept and discipline and provides educational audiences with inspiration and valuable techniques to create effective learning environments. The \$2,365 budgeted for Mr. Kronenberg's workshop includes consultation fees, transportation, meals, and lodging. The Almond-Bancroft School District is contributing \$500 toward Mr. Kronenberg's workshop.

The GIFTS committee at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School feels that peer mediation would reinforce the guiding principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution. Peer mediation provides students with the literacy skills to interact more effectively during times of conflict. Adults would be trained to develop a peer mediation program and would, in turn, train students to be peer mediators for conflicts involving elementary students. Alternative Resolutions, Inc. of Menasha, Wisconsin, has an established reputation of providing high-quality peer mediation



training to school districts. The \$2,415 budgeted for peer mediation training includes the cost of substitute teachers during teacher and student training, and consultation fees, mileage, travel time, and food for the consultant. The Almond-Bancroft School District is contributing \$600 for substitute teachers, the Almond-Bancroft Fifth-Grade School Store is contributing \$150 for peer mediation training, and the Almond-Bancroft Partners in Education organization has a \$100 pending contribution for peer mediation training.

The goals and objectives of the Almond-Bancroft Elementary School's school climate improvement initiatives will require several hours of work outside of regular contract time. The GIFTS committee members need to plan quality school-wide assemblies that reinforce the school's guiding principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution; distribute and review the results of several evaluation tools including WKCE test data for third through fifth-grade students, in-service speaker evaluation forms, school climate surveys, monthly office behavior referral forms, and peer mediation evaluation information; and synthesize data for presentations to the school board, publication in the district newsletter, posting on educational websites, and publication in education journals. The \$1,400.47 budget for GIFTS committee work includes payment to members for GIFTS program-related work done outside of contract hours and the calendar year and mileage reimbursement for meetings and work completed at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School outside of the contract calendar year.

The remaining \$344 of the GIFTS budget includes basic office supplies, t-shirts printed by the Portage County Sheriff's Department for fifth-grade CounterACT participants, and postage for GIFTS student-recognition cards to be sent home to families. The Almond-Bancroft School District is contributing \$269 to cover the cost of the t-shirts and postage. Appendix J lists the specific costs related to salaries and wages, travel, materials and supplies, and consultations



and contracts for the Dollar General Corporation Community Grant. Appendix K lists the sources of in-kind support related to salaries and wages, consultations and contracts, and materials and supplies.

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## Appendix A.: Cover Letter

August 1, 2007

Program Officer  
Dollar General Community Grant  
100 Mission Ridge  
Goodlettsville, TN 37072

Dear Sir or Madam:

This letter conveys my intent to submit a grant application in response to the RFP guidelines posted on your agency's website.

The Almond-Bancroft Elementary School in Almond, Wisconsin seeks to improve our school climate through a character education and literacy program called Giving Individuals Freedom To Succeed (GIFTS). Research demonstrates a relationship between positive school climate and increased student achievement. One contributing factor to a negative school climate is conflict. Research has shown that conflict is often the result of children lacking effective speaking and listening skills to interact more peacefully. Character education programs teach children the literacy skills necessary for peaceful living.

On behalf of Almond Bancroft Elementary School, I respectfully request \$4,905.47 in support of our research-based GIFTS program.

Short-term anticipated outcomes of the GIFTS program are that children and adults will improve their speaking and listening skills in order to resolve conflicts more effectively and that members of the Almond-Bancroft school community will demonstrate an increased level of respectful, responsible behaviors. A long-term anticipated outcome of the program is that student achievement on standardized assessments will improve.

You will receive the required documentation prior to the August 10, 2007 deadline.

Thank you in advance for the opportunity to help the children of Almond-Bancroft Elementary School through your financial assistance.

Sincerely,

Ms. Cynthia Wills,  
Fifth-Grade Teacher/GIFTS Committee Member  
Almond-Bancroft Elementary School  
1336 Elm St.  
Almond, WI 54909  
(715) 366-2941 Ext. 343



## Appendix B.: Dollar General Grant Application

**DOLLAR GENERAL®****B a c k - t o - S c h o o l   G r a n t s   A p p l i c a t i o n**

Community Initiatives Department  
100 Mission Ridge  
Goodlettsville, TN 37072

The Dollar General Back-to-School Grants provide funding to assist schools in meeting some of the financial challenges they face in implementing new programs or purchasing new equipment, materials or software for their school library or literacy program.

Funds requested must be used to enhance or expand the school's library, media center or literacy programs. Submissions will be judged based on creativity, statement of need and use of funds.

**Please Type or Print**

Date of Application:

June 28, 2007

School Name:

Almond-Bancroft Elementary School

School Address:

1336 Elm St.  
Almond, WI 54909

School Telephone:

(715) 366-2941

School Website:

www.abschools.k12.wi.us

Distance to nearest Dollar General Store:

13 miles

(Must be located in Dollar General's 35-state operating territory and must be within 20 miles of the nearest Dollar General Store.) A store locator is available at [www.dollargeneral.com](http://www.dollargeneral.com)

**Principal information:**

Name and title:

Mr. Jeff Rykal, K-12 Principal

Telephone number:

(715) 366-2941 X311

E-mail address:

jrykal@abschools.k12.wi.us

**Grant contact**

Name and title:

Ms. Cynthia Wills, 5th Grade Teacher

Telephone number:

(715) 366-2941 X343



E-mail address:

cwills@abschools.k12.wi.us

**Target Population (please check one)**☒

Elementary School

☐ Middle School☐ High School**Program/project information**

Name of program or project:

Giving Individuals Freedom To Succeed (GIFTS)

Number of students to be served:

Approximately 212 students

Program or project target audience (please circle the appropriate category):

New readers

Below grade level readers

Readers with learning disabilities

☒ General Literacy

Program or project dates:

August 2007 - August 2008

Amount requested (\$5,000 maximum):

\$4,905.47

Previous Dollar General grants (please provide date and amount):

No previous Dollar General grants received

Age of children served:

Ages 5-11

**Please include the following in your application:**

**Executive Summary** (½ page) – Brief description of organization and mission statement, brief summary of program or project, impact on community, history of organization and its accomplishments, and expected time-frame for project.

**Needs Statement** (½ page) – Brief description of the current needs or limitations of your existing literacy program(s). Provide demographic information for the student population to be served with the funds requested.

**Program Description** (up to 2 pages) – Clearly define project goals and objectives and criteria for evaluating program success, including measurement and evaluation procedures/standards.

**Budget** (1 page) - Allocation and narrative (Specifically, how Dollar General funds will be used in program/project.)

**Attachments must be typed on the organization's letterhead in 12-point font and limited to five, single sided pages or less with one inch margins on all four sides.**

**Submission deadlines: August 10**  
**Announcement dates: September 28**

Mail your grant application and attachments to: Community Initiatives Department, Back-to-School Grants, 100 Mission Ridge, Goodlettsville, TN 37072.

**Applications must be received, not postmarked, by the submission deadline. Incomplete or late applications will not be reviewed. Faxed and electronic applications are not accepted.**



## **Executive Summary**

The Giving Individuals Freedom To Succeed (GIFTS) program at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School in Almond, Wisconsin was developed by a committee comprised of the elementary principal, elementary guidance counselor, and four elementary teachers. The mission of the GIFTS program is to provide students with the literacy skills needed to create a positive, peaceful learning environment based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution. The GIFTS program provides students with instruction in the areas of respect, responsibility, and resolution. Students learn the meaning of the principles, practice identifying examples of the principles-in-action in themselves and others, and learn the speaking and listening skills necessary to work with each other productively and peacefully. Teachers work together to share the most effective practices that create a challenging, supportive learning environment for all students. The committee would like to develop the GIFTS program by offering all K-12 staff the inspiration and literacy skills offered by workshop speaker Corwin Kronenberg, a nationally-known expert on self-concept and discipline. The committee would also like to develop literacy skills by adding peer mediation to the developmental guidance curriculum and offer peer mediation as a service to students. The GIFTS program impacts the whole community. When children learn the literacy skills associated with respect, responsibility, and resolution, they will foster more positive, peaceful relationships with those in their environment - family, neighbors, friends, and individuals who provide community services. In the summer of 2004, a group of concerned elementary staff members met to discuss our school's current behavior management system. It was determined the negative consequences offered to students did not improve student behavior in the school. Research shows that younger students engage in negative forms of conflict because they do not have the literacy skills necessary to foster more positive outcomes. The committee created the GIFTS program to improve school climate using a preventative, positive discipline program that provides students with the literacy skills necessary to improve their interactions. Since the GIFTS program began in 2004, respect, responsibility, and resolution have become a visible foundation of the school. There is an increase in the use of meaningful consequences for inappropriate behaviors and role-playing involving respect, responsibility, and resolution. Staff members demonstrate more support for each other. August 2007 to August 2008 is the anticipated timeline for implementation and evaluation of GIFTS initiatives.

## **Needs Statement**

The Almond-Bancroft School District is a 485-student, K-12 school located in rural Central Wisconsin. The student body is approximately 88% Caucasian, 11.5% Hispanic, and 0.5% other. Forty-four percent of families qualify for free and reduced lunch. While literacy skills are taught in the regular-education classrooms and supplementary literacy services are offered through our Migrant Program and Title I program for eligible students, limited emphasis is placed on social literacy, which is effective speaking and listening skills necessary to accomplish desired outcomes.



## **Program Description**

The first goal of the GIFTS program is to develop a preventative discipline plan that focuses on character education, literacy development, and meaningful consequences at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School in Almond, WI. To meet this goal, the Portage County Sheriff's Department will provide fifth-grade students with CounterACT instruction, a literacy-based alcohol, chemical, and tobacco prevention program; administrators teachers, and staff will be taught necessary literacy skills to manage student behavior with dignity and meaningful consequences; teachers and support staff will send home positive reports about students' behaviors using a pre-printed postcard; students will be provided with character education and literacy instruction that focuses on respect, responsibility and resolution; teachers will identify students in need of positive adult interaction and develop relationships with them; and teachers and staff members will organize quarterly elementary school assemblies to reinforce the guiding principles of respect, resolution, and responsibility.

The second goal of the GIFTS program is to evaluate the effectiveness of Almond-Bancroft Elementary School's school climate initiatives. To meet this goal, the Dean of Students will document the number of behavior referrals to the elementary office at the end of each quarter; students, parents, administrators, and staff will complete the Wisconsin's Information Network for Successful Schools (WINSS) school climate survey; the school staff will complete an evaluation of in-service speaker, Corwin Kronenberg; GIFTS committee members will analyze 2007-2008 Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam data; elementary students will complete a peer mediation evaluation; and GIFTS committee members will analyze peer mediation evaluation information. In July 2008, GIFTS committee members will use enrollment data to determine the total number of third through fifth-grade students; this information will be compared with the number of third through fifth-grade students who utilized peer mediation to determine the percentage of third through fifth-grade students who used peer mediation to help them resolve conflicts with classmates. Committee members will also identify a list of facts students learned about conflict resolution and compare this information with the strategies students use to help them resolve conflicts with their peers.

## **Budget**

Most of the budget expenses for GIFTS school climate improvement initiatives at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School relate to staff training, an essential factor for meaningful change in an organization. Mr. Kronenberg is a nationally-known expert in self-concept and discipline and provides educational audiences with inspiration and valuable speaking and listening techniques to create effective learning environments. The \$2,365 budgeted for Mr. Kronenberg's workshop includes consultation fees, transportation, meals, and lodging. The Almond-Bancroft School District is contributing \$500 toward Mr. Kronenberg's workshop.

The GIFTS committee at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School feels that peer mediation would reinforce the guiding principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution. Peer mediation provides students with the literacy skills to interact more effectively during times of conflict. Adults would be trained to develop a peer mediation program and would, in turn, train students to be peer mediators for conflicts involving fellow elementary students. Alternative Resolutions,



Inc. of Menasha, Wisconsin, has an established reputation of providing high-quality peer mediation training to school districts. The \$2,415 budgeted for peer mediation training includes substitute teachers attending training as well as training student peer mediators, and consultation fees, mileage, travel time, and food for the consultant. The Almond-Bancroft School District is contributing \$600 for substitute teachers, the Almond-Bancroft Fifth-Grade School Store is contributing \$150 for peer mediation training, and the Almond-Bancroft Partners in Education organization has a \$100 pending contribution to off-set peer mediation training fees.

The goals and objectives of the Almond-Bancroft Elementary School's school climate improvement initiatives will require several hours of work outside of regular contract time. The GIFTS committee members need to plan quality school-wide assemblies that reinforce the school's guiding principles of respect, responsibility, and resolution; distribute and review the results of several evaluation tools including WKCE test data for third through fifth-grades, in-service speaker evaluation forms, school climate surveys, monthly office behavior referral forms, and peer mediation evaluation information; and synthesize data for presentations to the school board, publication in the district newsletter, posting on educational websites, and publication in education journals. The \$1,400.47 budget for GIFTS committee work includes payment to members for GIFTS program-related work done outside of contract hours and the calendar year and mileage reimbursement for meetings and work completed at Almond-Bancroft Elementary School outside of the contract calendar year.

The remaining \$344 of the GIFTS budget includes basic office supplies, t-shirts printed by the Portage County Sheriff's Department for fifth-grade CounterACT participants, and postage for GIFTS student recognition cards to be sent home to families. The Almond-Bancroft School District is contributing \$269 to cover the cost of the t-shirts and postage.

## Appendix C.: Dean of Students Quarterly Behavior Report

Dean of Students  
Quarterly Behavior Report  
Date of Report: \_\_\_\_\_

This report serves to document behavior interventions that assist in the evaluation of the effectiveness of Almond-Bancroft Elementary School's Giving Individuals Freedom To Succeed (G.I.F.T.S) program.

1. Total number of student office referrals for behaviors occurring on the bus or school property:
2. Total number of different students representing office referrals (if known):
3. Total number of students in the elementary school this quarter:
4. Percentage of elementary student office referrals (divide total from #3 by total from #2):
5. Total number of office referrals for each of the school settings below:
  - a. Bus referrals:
  - b. Cafeteria referrals:
  - c. Playground referrals:
  - d. Hallway referrals:
  - e. Classroom referrals:
  - f. Other:
6. Total number of office referrals relating the guiding principles below:
  - a. Respect:
  - b. Responsibility:
  - c. Resolution:

Comments:



## Appendix D.: Student School Climate Survey



## School Climate Surveys

### Sample Elementary Student Survey

Answer the following questions about your school. Click "Submit" when you are done with this page.

	<b>When I am at school, I feel:</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
1.	I belong.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	I am safe.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	I have fun learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	I like this school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	This school is good.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	I have freedom at school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	I have choices in what I learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	My teacher treats me with respect.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	My teacher cares about me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10.	My teacher thinks I will be successful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<b>When I am at school, I feel:</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
11.	My teacher listens to my ideas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12.	My principal cares about me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.	My teacher is a good teacher.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



14.	My teacher believes I can learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15.	I am recognized for good work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16.	I am challenged by the work my teacher asks me to do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17.	The work I do in class makes me think.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18.	I know what I am supposed to be learning in my classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19.	I am a good student.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20.	I can be a better student.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<b>When I am at school, I feel:</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
21.	Very good work is expected at my school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22.	I behave well at school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23.	Students are treated fairly by teachers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24.	Students are treated fairly by the principal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25.	Students are treated fairly by the people on yard duty.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26.	Students at my school treat me with respect.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27.	Students at my school are friendly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28.	I have lots of friends.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29.	I have support for learning at home.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30.	My family believes I can do well in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31.	My family wants me to do well in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



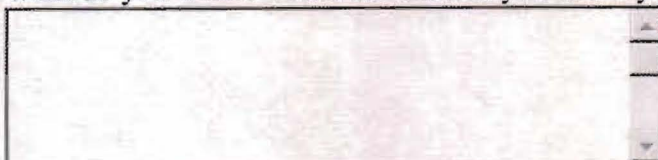
What do you like about this school?



What do you wish were different at this school?



What do you wish I would have asked you about your school?



The above survey was taken from Data Analysis for Comprehensive Schoolwide Improvement by Victoria Bernhardt, published by:

Eye on Education

6 Depot Way West

Larchmont, NY 10583

[www.eyeoneducation.com](http://www.eyeoneducation.com)

## Appendix E.: Staff School Climate Survey



## Staff Climate Survey

## Sample Staff Survey

Answer the following questions about your school. Click "Submit" when you are done with this page.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>I feel:</b>						
1.	like I belong at this school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	that staff care about me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	that learning can be fun	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	that learning is fun at this school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	recognized for good work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	intrinsically rewarded for doing my job well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>I work with people who:</b>						
7.	treat me with respect	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	listen if I have ideas about doing things better	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>My administrator:</b>						
9.	treats me with respect	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10.	is an effective instructional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



	leader					
11.	facilitates communication effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12.	supports me in my work with students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.	supports shared decision making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14.	allows me to be an effective instructional leader	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15.	is effective in helping us reach our vision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>I have the opportunity to:</b>						
16.	develop my skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17.	think for myself, not just carry out instructions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>I love:</b>						
18.	working at this school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19.	seeing the results of my work with students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>I work effectively with:</b>						
20.	special education students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21.	limited English-speaking students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22.	an ethnically/socially diverse population of students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23.	heterogeneously grouped classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24.	low-achieving students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>



<b>I believe student achievement can increase through:</b>						
25.	hands-on learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
26.	effective professional development related to our vision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
27.	integrating instruction across the curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
28.	thematic instruction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
29.	cooperative learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
30.	multi-age classrooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
31.	student self-assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
32.	authentic assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
33.	the use of computers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
34.	the use of varied technologies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
35.	providing a threat-free environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
36.	close personal relationships between students and teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
37.	addressing student learning styles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
38.	effective parent involvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
39.	partnerships with business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
40.	teacher use of student achievement data	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>Morale is high on the part of:</b>						
41.	teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
42.	students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
43.	support staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
44.	administrators	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>



		Disagree				Agree
45.	I believe that every student can learn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
46.	The instructional program at this school is challenging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
47.	The school provides an atmosphere where every student can succeed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
48.	Quality work is expected of all students at this school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
49.	Quality work is expected of me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
50.	Quality work is expected of all the adults working at this school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
51.	The vision for this school is shared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
52.	We have an action plan in place which can get us to our vision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
53.	This school has a good public image	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
54.	I think it is important to communicate often with parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
55.	I communicate with parents often about their child's progress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
56.	I communicate with parents often about class activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
57.	I am clear about what my job is at this school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
58.	I feel that others are clear about what my job is at this school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Items for teachers and instructional assistants only:</b>						

59.	The student outcomes for my class(es) are clear to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
60.	The student outcomes for my class(es) are clear to my students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
61.	Teachers in this school communicate with each other to make student learning consistent across grades	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
62.	Learning is fun in my classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
63.	I love to teach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**@Education for the Future Imitative. (1997). San Francisco: Pacific Bell Foundations.**



## Appendix F.: Parent School Climate Survey



## Characteristics of Successful Schools

### Survey Questions for Family-School-Community Partnerships

Answer the following questions about your school.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. A committee of parents and staff makes decisions about ways to involve families in students' learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. District policy promotes family involvement in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. The school communicates its family involvement policy to parents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Parents know when and where school committees meet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Parents feel welcome to comment at school meetings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Teachers have adequate time to meet with parents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Parents serve on all school committees.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Parents know what their students are expected to learn in each subject.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. The school regularly surveys parents about what they need to promote students' learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Teachers meet with parents about their students' progress several times each year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree



11. Parents are welcome to visit the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Parents know which staff members to contact about matters concerning their children.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Parents share information about their children with teachers throughout the school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. The school provides opportunities for families to celebrate the contributions of diverse cultures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. The school invites parents of all backgrounds to help plan activities for parents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Staff members ask all parents about their children's strengths and how they will learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. School staff receive training about the cultures of the families in the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. If needed, translators are available to help non-English speaking parents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. If needed, the school provides information for families in languages other than English.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. The school sponsors family learning workshops at times and places accessible to all.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
21. The school provides families with information on child development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. The school provides families with information on parenting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. The school has a space for parents to use and obtain resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



24. Parent advocates or liaisons are available to help parents meet with school staff.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. The school building is available for use by the community outside regular school hours.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. The school trains parent and community members for meaningful volunteer work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. At least one school staff member is responsible for linking parents with resources in the community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Volunteers feel appreciated and recognized by the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. The school distributes information about community programs for families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Appendix G.: Administrator School Climate Survey



## Characteristics of Successful Schools

### Survey Questions for Standards of the Heart

Answer the following questions about your school.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Core values such as respect and responsibility are a part of classroom instruction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The community helped define and promote the core values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. School policies are consistent with the core values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Students and staff are recognized for demonstrating the core values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Teachers let parents know how well their children demonstrate the core values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. All students and staff participate in creating a positive school climate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Diversity is celebrated through a variety of programs and activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Parents support school policies creating a positive school climate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. School staff know how to respond to crisis situations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. All teachers implement effective classroom management strategies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. Staff and students follow the	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



district nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policies.					
12. Families have materials and activities that promote core values in the home.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. School staff seek diverse input about ways to promote standards of the heart.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. The school coordinates promotion of standards of the heart with community groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. School staff demonstrate an ethic of volunteerism.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. All school staff play a role in preventing youth risk behaviors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. The curriculum helps students develop the skills, attitudes, and knowledge to make responsible decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. All students have access to counselors, school nurses, social workers, or psychologists when they are needed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. School staff receive continuous professional development to understand the risks facing students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. Strategies, such as tutoring and mentoring programs, promote positive relationships among all students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
21. Support is provided to students transitioning to a different school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. All students are meaningfully connected to an adult at school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. The school day allows time for adults to connect with students personally.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



24. Students participate in solving problems and making decisions about the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. The curriculum helps students apply their learning in school and community situations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. All teachers recognize and build on the talents of each student.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. All students have adequate access to extra- and co-curricular activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Youth and adults in the school and community have the same expectations for student behavior.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. School staff model the behaviors expected of students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. Students are held responsible for their behavior in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
31. School staff are held responsible for their behavior in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. Teachers, administrators, and school board members believe each student can become a caring, contributing, and responsible citizen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. All students are expected to provide service to their school or community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



## Appendix H.: In-Service Evaluation Form

## In-Service Evaluation Form

Topic: Corwin Kronenberg "Teaching Children to be Responsible" Date: \_\_\_\_\_**Rating:**

Circle the number that best represents your opinions about the workshop.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	No Opinion	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My expectations for this workshop were met.	1	2	3	4	5
2. This information is important for educators to know.	1	2	3	4	5
3. This workshop addressed a need in our schools.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Implementation of workshop content will be beneficial to me professionally.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The content of the workshop was appropriate for the time allowed.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The presenter was knowledgeable about the topic.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The presenter was easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The presenter was engaging.	1	2	3	4	5

**Feedback**

1. What strategies/techniques presented at this workshop did you find to be the **most** useful?
2. Would you consider all the components of this workshop useful? (circle one) YES NO

3. Which populations do you believe would benefit from this workshop? (Check all that apply.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ general educators    \_\_\_\_\_ administrators    \_\_\_\_\_ parents    \_\_\_\_\_ others
4. Will you be able to implement workshop content at your school using the information provided at this workshop? \_\_\_\_ If no, what additional information/materials are needed?
5. What other training topics would you suggest as follow-up to this workshop?
6. Do you have any suggestions and/or ideas that will assist us in future workshops on this topic?

### **Degree of Change**

For each of the following four types of change, please indicate the degree of change you have experienced as a result of this workshop by circling one of the four rating numbers:

Type of Change	None	Slight	Moderate	Much
1. <b>Informational Change:</b> an increase in your awareness and understanding of the subject matter of the workshop.	1	2	3	4
2. <b>Behavioral Change:</b> an increase in your ability to apply the subject matter of the workshop.	1	2	3	4
3. <b>Attitudinal Change:</b> a modification of your beliefs and perceptions related to the subject matter of the workshop.	1	2	3	4
4. <b>Motivational Change:</b> an increase in your desire to be involved with activities related to the subject matter of the workshop.	1	2	3	4

### **Comments:**

Adopted from the Alabama Department of Education  
 State Improvement Grant Workshop Evaluation  
 Permission Granted on July 20, 2007



## Appendix I.: Peer Mediation Evaluation Form

## Peer Mediation Evaluation

1. Do you know that your school can give you help called peer mediation to solve conflicts with your classmates? Circle one: yes no
2. Have you and a classmate worked with someone called a peer mediator to help you solve conflicts? Circle one: yes no
3. If you and a classmate worked with a peer mediator, did you think the peer mediator helped you solve the conflict? Circle one: yes no I did not use a peer mediator
4. Were you taught different ways to solve conflicts (problems) with your classmates this year? Circle one: yes no
5. Tell us what you learned about solving conflicts with your classmates.

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6. How do you try to solve conflicts with your classmates?

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## Appendix J.: Budget for Dollar General Corporation Community Grant

*Budget for Dollar General Corporation Community Grant*

Category	Notes	Cost
Salaries and Wages		
1. Stipend for GIFTS committee work extending beyond contract hours or calendar year	1. Not to exceed 75 hours @ \$12.50/hr. plus Social Security/Medicare and Wisconsin Teacher Retirement	1. \$1,110.47
Travel		
1. Mileage reimbursement for in- service speaker Corwin Kronenberg	1. 510 mi. @ not to exceed \$0.50/mi.	1. \$ 255.00
2. Mileage reimbursement for peer mediation trainer Cheryl Stinsky	2. 130 mi. @ not to exceed \$0.50/mi.	2. \$ 65.00
3. Mileage reimbursement for GIFTS committee members for meetings held at Almond- Bancroft School outside of the school calendar year	3. 580 mi. @ not to exceed \$0.50/mi.	3. \$ 290.00
4. Lodging reimbursement for in-	4. 1 night @ \$80/night	4. \$ 80.00



Category	Notes	Cost
Travel		
service speaker Corwin Kronenberg		
5. Meal reimbursement for in-service speaker Corwin Kronenberg	5. 1 day @ \$30/day	5. \$ 30.00
6. Meal reimbursement for peer mediation trainer Cheryl Stinsky	6. 1 day \$30/day	6. \$ 30.00
7. Travel time for peer mediation trainer Cheryl Stinsky from Menasha, WI	7. 2 hr. 30 min @90/hr.	7. \$ 225.00
Materials and Supplies		
1. Basic office supplies	1. Not to exceed \$75	1. \$ 75.00
Consultations and Contracts		
1. Corwin Kronenberg: "Teaching Children to be Responsible"	1. 1/2 day in-service @ \$2,000/day (-\$500 contribution)	1. \$1,500.00
2. Cheryl Stinsky of Alternative Resolutions, Inc." staff peer mediation training	2. 1 day @ \$1,495/day (-\$250 contribution)	2. \$1,245.00
Total		\$4,905.47

## Appendix K.: Budget for In-Kind Support

*Budget for In-Kind Support*

Category	Notes	Cost
Salaries and Wages		
1. Substitute teachers for staff peer mediation training	1. 3 substitutes @ \$100/day	1. \$ 300.00
2. Substitute teachers for student peer mediation training	2. 3 substitutes @ \$100/day	2. \$ 300.00
Consultations and Contracts		
1. Contribution toward in-service speaker Corwin Kronenberg	1. \$500 confirmed contribution from Almond-Bancroft School District	1. \$ 500.00
2. Contribution toward staff peer mediation training	2. \$150 confirmed contribution from Almond-Bancroft Fifth-Grade School Store Organization	2. \$ 150.00
3. Contribution toward staff peer mediation training	3. \$100 pending contribution from Almond-Bancroft Partners in Education Organization	3. \$ 100.00



Category	Notes	Cost
Materials and Supplies		
1. CounterACT t-shirts for fifth-grade students	1. 34 t-shirts @ \$6.00/ea	1. \$ 204.00
2. Postage for mailing GIFTS student-recognition cards	2. 250 postcards @ \$0.26/ea.	2. \$ 65.00
Total		\$1,619.00